

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

----- 119681

P R 232123Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9178

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 6401

EXDIS

BRASILIA FOR HUME

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP VE

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SECRETARY BUTZ

1. SUMMARY: IN HIS WORKING SESSION WITH SECRETARY BUTZ, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE CONTRERAS EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. HOWEVER, HE AND HIS STAFF DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE THOUGHT OUT PRECISELY WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE FROM US. THE MINISTER PLANS TO CONVOKE A MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO DISCUSS OVERALL PROCEDURES FOR ARRANGING SUCH ASSISTANCE, WHILE HIS DIRECTOR OF PLANNING WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY FOR MORE DETAILED TALKS. ALTHOUGH CONTRERAS AND HIS PEOPLE TEND TO THINK IN TERMS OF UNREALISTIC ASPIRATIONS, BUT WE MAY HAVE AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY HERE TO ENGAGE THE INTEREST OF THE GOV IN BILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE CRITICAL FIELD OF AGRICULTURE. THE VISIT OF SECRETARY BUTZ WAS MOST USEFUL IN OPENING THAT DOOR. END SUMMARY.

2. SECRETARY BUTZ MET FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR WITH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE CARMELO CONTRERAS ON JUNE 19. THE AMBASSADOR, AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE, DAVID HUME (FAS/USDA), KENNETH FRICK (ASCS/USDA), QUENTIN WEST (ERS/USDA) AND RICHARD SMITH (FAS/USDA) ACCOMPANIED SECRETARY BUTZ. MINISTER CONTRERAS WAS SUPPORTED BY VICE MINISTER ANTONIO ALVAREZ, DOUGLAS JATEM

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(DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR PLANNING), NERIO GARCIA (DIRECTOR GENERAL

FOR ADMINISTRATION), AND MIGUEL GRANADOS (ADVISOR TO THE MINISTER).

3. SECRETARY BUTZ OPENED THE MEETING BY INVITING THE MINISTER TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES WHERE THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WOULD ARRANGE A SUITABLE PROGRAM. THE MINISTER WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED AND SAID HE WOULD CHECK WITH PRESIDENT PERZ ON THE TIMING OF THE TRIP. (THE AMBASSADOR IS SENDING CONTRERAS A NOTE CONFIRMING THE INVITATION.)

4. THE MINISTER REFERRED TO HIS SEVERAL PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH SECRETARY BUT ABOUT POSSIBLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. HE EMPHASIZED THE STRONG COMMITMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ TO VENEZUELAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND HIS OWN VIEW THAT US COOPERATION IN THAT PROCESS COULD BE OF GREAT VALUE. CONTRERAS BORE DOWN HARD ON THE THEME THAT THE GOV HAD HAD ENOUGH STUDIES, PLANS AND THEORIES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES; WHAT IT NEEDS NOW IS ACTION IN THE FORM OF PRACTICAL HELP WITH SPECIFIC PROGRAMS.

5. THE MINISTER THEN CALLED ON JATEM FOR A CATALOGUE OF AREAS OF INTEREST IN WHICH US ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED. JATEM TOUCHED ON THE FOLLOWING: CROP SUBSTITUTION, RESEARCH ON IMPROVING CORN AND RICE YIELDS, INTRODUCTION OF NEW VARIETIES, SEED CERTIFICATION PROGRAM, AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR. THE GOV SIDE STRESSED THE GENERAL INTEREST HERE IN US AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY PROPERLY ADAPTED TO VENEZUELA'S TROPICAL CLIMATIC CONDITIONS. SECRETARY BUTZ EXPRESSED HIS OWN VIEW THAT SUCH ADAPTATION IS ESSENTIAL--THAT TOO OFTEN ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO DUPLICATE US EXPERIENCES IN AGRICULTURE WITHOUT MAKING DUE ALLOWANCE FOR RADICALLY DIFFERENT CONDITIONS IN RECEIVING COUNTRIES.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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P R 232123Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9179

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 6401

EXDIS

BRASILIA FOR HUME

6. AT THE REQUEST OF SECRETARY BUTZ, MR. WEST OUTLINED OUR AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS IN IRAN AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE AGRICULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JOINT IRANIAN-US COMMISSION. SECRETARY BUTZ EXPLAINED THAT SIMILAR PROGRAMS WE MIGHT UNDERTAKE WITH VENEZUELA WOULD NECESSARILY, AS IN THE IRANIAN CASE, BE FUNDED BY THE GOV THROUGH A CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WAYS TO GET AT THE PROBLEM OF COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS BESIDE THE JOINT-COMMISSION APPROACH. HE RECALLED HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP TO LOOK AT POTENTIAL MEANS FOR COLLABORATION.

7. CONTRERAS FOUND THE DESCRIPTION OF THE IRANIAN PROGRAMS INTERESTING. HE ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT THE GOV WOULD BEAR THE COST OF SIMILAR EFFORTS HERE, AND POINTED OUT THAT HIS MINISTRY HAS ALREADY CONTRACTED FOR PRIVATE US EXPERTISE IN A SURVEY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP. SECRETARY BUTZ PROPOSED AS A FIRST STEP THAT THE EMBASSY'S ECONOMIC COUNSELOR AND AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE ENTER INTO CONVERSATIONS WITH APPROPRIATE MINISTRY OFFICIALS TO IDENTIFY PRIORITIES AND DISCUSS PROGRAMS. MR. HUME SUGGESTED THAT THE TWO SIDES CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF A SHORT SURVEY--PERHAPS SIX MONTHS IN DURATION--BY EXPERTS TO ORDER THE PRIORITIES AND DETERMINE FEASIBILITIES.

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8. THE MINISTER SAID HE WOULD BE CHECKING THESE MATTERS WITH THE PRESIDENT AND WOULD LIKE EARLY ON TO CONVOKE A MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO CONSIDER OVERALL PROCEDURES. HE DESIGNATED JATEM AS THE POINT OF CONTACT IN THE MINISTRY FOR WORKING-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS, AND THE LATTER TOLD THE AMBASSADOR HE WOULD SHORTLY BE IN TOUCH WITH THE AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE.

9. COMMENT: CONTRERAS AND HIS PEOPLE CLEARLY HAD NOT GIVEN MUCH SYSTEMATIC THOUGHT TO WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE FROM US. THERE WAS ALSO A TENDENCY ON THEIR PART - A TENDENCY THAT RUNS ALL THROUGH THIS GOVERNMENT--TO TALK IN TERMS OF UNREALISTIC AND EXCESSIVELY GRANDIOSE ASPIRATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THE MINISTER IS HIGHLY RECEPTIVE TO THE CONCEPT OF BILATERALISM IN AGRICULTURE AND TO THE PRAGMATIC APPROACH SECRETARY BUTZ SO ABLY DEVELOPED. WE MAY, THEREFORE, HAVE

AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE THE GOV IN AN AREA IT CONSIDERS OF  
PRIME IMPORTANCE AND TO DEMONSTRATE THE PRACTICAL BENEFITS  
OF A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US. THE VISIT OF SECRETARY  
BUTZ GAVE US THIS OPENING AND WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE VERY  
EFFECTIVE USE HE MADE OF HIS TWO DAYS HERE.  
SHLAUDEMAM

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